

Wetmore (S.W.)

WITH COMPLIMENTS OF THE AUTHOR.

WHAT IS MODERN HOMŒOPATHY?

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WHAT IS MODERN HOMŒOPATHY?

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE BUFFALO MEDICAL ASSOCIATION,
SEPTEMBER 4, 1877, BY

S. W. WETMORE, M.D.

Mr. President and Gentlemen.—Some writer (his name escapes me) says, "If one volunteers to sing or speak before a company, his efforts are open for criticism; not so if he appear by request." I may justly hope, therefore, for some indulgence while considering the theme and responding to the interrogation of "What is Modern Homœopathy?"

When I began to read medicine in 1852 I had scarcely crossed the threshold of my preceptor's office when I heard him respond to that interrogation in this wise: "It is a d——d humbug, and I'd kick any d——d fool out of my office who would have the audacity to advocate it."

A few days later the then great surgeon, Prof. Horace Ackley, M.D., of Cleveland, Ohio, corroborated this statement with great vehemence, using more potent and a greater number of adjectives.

I looked upon these men as expounders of the law, as exponents of the great truths and principles which should guide me in my chosen profession. Anything and everything advocated or condemned by them was stored away in memory's granary as facts unchangeable. Hence I was the better prepared to listen to the inuendoes, yes, satire, ridicule and condemnation of homœopathy by the faculty, at Ann Arbor, Michigan, where I attended lectures in 1857. During that long six months' course almost daily I heard it, as all medical students hear it, denounced bitterly as an atrocious imposition upon the credulity of mankind. One Professor, with no little show of philosophic bearing, would dissipate it into thin air by his mock analysis; another would give Voltaire's famous definition, "The art of amusing the patient whilst nature cures the disease," while another would jocosely laugh at the infinitesimal medicinal moonshine, and declare it was as evanescent as Broussaism and would vanish like an *ignus fatuus*. My class-mates, all my associates, the students en masse, e'en the atmosphere I breathed in and about the college, all were impregnated with anti-similars. In short, during my entire pupilage I heard but one verdict, "*a gigantic humbug*," a doctrinal monstrosity, and those who practiced it uneducated impostors. So time passed on, as time had gone, and with it my old prejudicial feelings which received a new impetus by listening to the lectures of the venerated Charles A. Lee, in 1861, in the University of Buffalo. On reviewing the state of my mind at that period I remember that I

looked upon the old Professor as almost a monomaniac upon the subject of infinitesimals, while his colleagues seemed to take it jocosely and were much more liberal and rational, and evinced much more charity for what they seemed to term a harmless mode of treating disease.

The following spring I bore away my hard earned diploma, proud of my alma mater, and full of *l'esprit du corps*, ready to reiterate all I knew, and much that I did not concerning this subject matter, losing no time in doing so at every favorable opportunity, to my pupils, my private classes, and in the dissecting room of this college, for seven years, although I knew nothing of homœopathy save that which I had gleaned from Pereira's *Materia Medica*, volume one, page 168, I had never read one of its journals, or even conversed with one of its physicians. I positively knew nothing of that which I condemned, the measure and cause of my intolerance was my ignorance, as is the case of nineteen-twentieths of the physicians of our school throughout the globe to-day. The traditional teachings of our masters as well as the power of custom and fashion, or society's opinion seemed to have held sway over our will to investigate that which was seemingly absurd. When we are to the world most wise we are really most replete with folly, and our ignorance struts in the garb of knowledge. We are too apt to allow some one else to think for us; to think under others' supervision. We should not take everything at second hand, but think, act, try, analyze and experiment for ourselves more.

During the two winters it was my pleasing duty to teach Anatomy in the medical department of the University of Worcester, at Cleveland, Ohio, I heard more of homœopathy, saw more of it, and realized its importance and status in society more than ever before. When I returned to my practice in the spring of 1872 I resolved to investigate for myself. I procured Hempel's work, read its preface, introduction, theory, etc., etc., with no little pleasure, but as soon as I had read his *modus operandi* of preparing remedies, attenuations, triturations, doses, etc., I threw down the book with that too familiar adjective, more forcible than euphonious, though uttered by that famous old surgeon, my preceptor, Dr. Sherwood, many years ago. I averred that Hahnemann must have been an old idiot, or a monomaniac, and his followers must needs be knaves or fools, for it was certainly the chief of humbugs. Without any further investigation we laid homœopathy on the shelf, where M. Andral and Sir James Y. Simpson, Hooker, and Holmes had laid it many years before (and I have reason to think now with about the same amount of reasoning). I was taught to think that they were great men, and I was willing to adopt their conclusions and think as they did, for I could not, through any known mode of reasoning, make it appear obvious that the law of *similia similibus curantur* was a correct one, and that an infinitesimal dose of a known drug could have any utility whatever in the treatment of disease. Dr. John Hunter used to

say to his pupils, "don't stop to think, but try, act, experiment, and analyze for yourselves." Other great philosophers, like Bacon, Bartlett, and Hugh Miller, have taught us that "no *a priori* reasonings or considerations could establish either the truth or falsity of alleged facts." Verification or confutation can only be established by experiment. Fear and incomprehensibility have kept us, like the old mariner, for many years hugging the barren shores of tradition. Descartes kindled a furious war against the theory of gravitation on the ground that it was incomprehensible, not knowing how bodies not in contact could affect each other. The opponents of Copernicus maintained that the earth stood still, otherwise a stone would not strike at the foot of a tower when let fall from the top. Whoever dares to hold an opinion of his own is considered and declared an outcast, a pariah, but where should we stand to-day in astronomy if Galileo, Keppler, and Newton had not been of a different mind from Ptolemy? Forced as I was to recognize the possibility of experimental research opening to my prejudiced mind the mysteries of this then supposed moonshine doctrine of similars, I demurred on account of its preposterous character, and from that time up to within a short time I have been playing the part of a blind horse on a treadmill. Who among us has not at times been forced to give homœopathy a thought? What physician of ordinary observation has not seen favorable results under homœopathic management that were considered hopeless cases in their own hands? It is true we have had many, many, very many like cases with like results that they had considered incurable, but "let us give the devil his due." In the one case too little medicine, in the other too much, might have been given; extremes in both methods of treatment are not uncommon. That we, as rational prescribers, give too much medicine daily does not admit of cavil or doubt. I believe that nine-tenths of the cases that we are called to see will get well without any medicine at all, only requiring good nursing, dietetic and hygienic measures dictated by good sound sense assisting the *vis medicatrix natura*.

Show me the practitioner of five, ten, fifteen, or twenty years' experience who has not, time without number, become disgusted with drugs, having lost confidence in them and in his own ability, and who has not had a constant routine of disappointments and errors, and I will show you one who has given very little medicine. We are constantly floating on a sea of doubt and groping in the dark. When I began the practice of medicine I supposed it was a fixed science, as certain in practice as it appeared true in theory. I thought we had fifty specifics for every disease. I know now we have a hundred diseases without a specific. *Magendie* says "Medicine is no science." "The science of medicine," says Sir Astley Cooper, "is founded on conjecture." Sir John Forbes declares that in a large majority of cases diseases are cured by nature in spite of the doctors. Dr. Mason Good said of medicine that it was a jargon, and had destroyed more lives than war, pestilence

and famine combined. Old Dr. Holcombe thought that doctors were blind men and struck at disease in the dark, and lucky if they killed the malady and not the patient.

Who does not admire the remark of the dying Dumoulin, "that he left the two greatest physicians behind him, *diet* and *water*?" and who does not concur in the exclamation of Frappart, "Medicine poor science, doctors poor philosophers, patients poor victims:" Having thus digressed, let us return to the question, what is the *Modern Philosophy of Homœopathy*? According to Holcombe, "it is the cure of a natural disease by producing a similar artificial disease in the same parts and tissues, which can only be done by drugs or remedies which produce similar symptoms; hence, *similia similibus curantur*, or 'like cures like.'"

The idea of similars was enunciated long before the Spartan republic in a book on the relations of medicine to man, attributed to Hippocrates, and at any rate the product of a remote period. The sentence is in original Greek, and says, "sick people are cured by remedies which produce analogous diseases." To one who has carefully traced the progress of medicine through the various chronological periods from the days of Galen to the present time it will appear obvious that not unfrequently diseases have been cured in accordance with the law of similars, or by remedies which in health are capable of producing analogous maladies.

Dr. Holcombe says, "This is the fundamental idea of homœopathy, its true basis, its corner stone, its only essential element. All questions of doses, pellets, globules, tinctures of dynamizations, of what Hahnemann said, of what this or that disciple said or did, of imagination, diet, etc., etc., have no logical bearing on the question, and are altogether collateral and impertinent." The principle of homœopathy is independent of the dose. The best dose can only be adjusted by observation and experiment. An ounce of sulphate of magnesia given in a case of diarrhœa is as homœopathic as if it was given in grain doses. In the treatment of ordinary diseases, however, doses so small that they would be entirely harmless to a healthy system, and difficult of analysis by our ordinary methods have certainly been proven by experiment to be most curative in the treatment of diseased conditions. This may not appear so strange when we take into consideration "all the great operations of nature, those of heat, light, chemical action, etc., and those also of the human frame, especially the wonderful modifications of the nerve fluid, and the physio-chemical changes of nutrition, are carried on by microscopic, atomic, and infinitesimal movements, entirely transcending our imagination."

"There are many natural agencies, malaria, effluvia, etc., which cannot be seen, felt, weighed or analyzed by man, that produce the most powerful morbid impressions on the system, so gradually, and insensibly too, that man at the time is wholly unconscious of their action. It is not unreasonable to suppose that drugs may act in a similar manner, nothing being felt by

the patient during the gradual removal of the disease. The modern discoveries in physical science help us not only to realize the existence and powers of infinitesimal atoms of medicine, but they give us some information of how they act. It is conceded that all the operations of nature, the beginnings of life, take place on an infinitesimal scale. Light causes the chemical changes in the ultimate cells which determine the organization of plants. Now the wave length of each ray of light is many millionths of an inch, and thousands of millions of vibrations of that wave of light occur in a single second. Each individual vibration of that infinitesimal wave contributes its share to the grand result, the growth and forms of the vegetable kingdom. Not one vibration could be changed or lost without affecting the first steps of organization, and thereby modifying the whole final issue. From this fact we easily pass to the corresponding idea that the homœopathic atom may start or excite in the diseased ultimate molecule infinitesimal changes of nutrition which shall quietly and imperceptibly affect organic movements of which we see only the beneficent result."

It would seem from consulting the best authority in this school that in the treatment of disease homœopathy has its limitation. It cannot always be brought into requisition from the fact that it only professes to cure those morbid conditions which can be imitated on the healthy body. It does not claim to be complete in itself, but simply a reform in the department of therapeutics, that homœopathy begins where allopathy ends, and therefore the homœopath should be thoroughly acquainted with every system of medicine. Holcombe defines a homœopathic physician "to be one who uses the surgical, obstetrical, mechanical and chemical measures of the old school, and in the treatment of disease is guided by the homœopathic law." This law seems to have been partially recognized by several distinguished modern writers of our school. The first citation is from Trousseau. "There is every proof that local inflammations are frequently cured by the direct application of irritants, which cause a similar inflammation, the artificial irritation substituting itself for the primitive one." *Trousseau et Pidoux traite de therapeutique*, tome one, page 470. Upon this ground, (says Dr. Simon's Cyclopedia of Practical Medicine, volume four, page 375,) "we are disposed to suggest the use of strychnine in tetanus, not that we have become followers of Hahnemann, but that it is a simple and undeniable fact that disorders are occasionally removed by remedies which have the power of producing similar affections." "The same medicine may produce opposite effects in health and disease," says Wood. "Thus, cayenne pepper, which produces in the healthy fauces redness and burning pain, acts as a sedative in the sore throat of scarlet fever. A concentrated solution of acetate of lead acts as an irritant, while the same solution very much diluted will act as a sedative." *Wood's Therapeutics*, vol. I., page 32.

As philosophical practitioners we all treat diseases homœo-

opathically every day without giving it a thought of the homœopathic law. A few of the instances might be enumerated in passing, like the ordinary applications to granular eye-lids, the ordinary collyria, nitrate of silver to ulcerated throats, or surfaces anywhere, the use of blisters, iodines, caustics in various conditions, are all examples in point. It is obvious that they produce a similar artificial disease, and the return to health is the result. It is supposed that every drug has certain affinities for certain organs and tissues of the human system, and it has been proven that "what nitrate of silver is to the eye or throat, belladonna is to the brain, cantharides to the kidneys, arsenic to the stomach, tartar emetic to the lungs, calomel to the liver, nux vomica to the spinal cord, etc., etc."

From our own experiments we know that colocynth concentrated will produce terrible griping, given in small doses one drop of the tinct. every x, xv or xx minutes will control a certain kind of colic. Cantharides produces strangury, diluted, will relieve it in a short time. Arsenic will inflame the alimentary canal, diluted and given properly it will cure gastritis and some kinds of diarrhœa. Belladonna in small doses will relieve a congested brain, while large doses will produce it. Ipecac in large doses will produce nausea and vomiting, diarrhœa and dysentery, very much diluted it will control nausea and vomiting. I think it will not unfrequently control sympathetic nausea when everything else fails, while large doses, say grains xx to xxx, will cure obstinate diarrhœas and acute dysentery. Many, many more morbid conditions treated by like therapeutical means might be mentioned which have come within our limited experience during the last past few months, but enough to satisfy us that there is *something* in the homœopathic law of cure.

It was an accidental circumstance that caused me to take up homœopathy from the shelf where our verdict had laid it in 1872, and when I resolved to experiment I pledged myself not to take anything on the *ipse dixit* of any man, and hence I treated my cases *secundum artem*, using the lowest potencies in the form of mother-tinctures. Having had no confidence in the dilutions as recommended: the attenuations, triturations, globules, pellets, etc., I have never used them as yet. I have no sympathy whatever with those who advocate the "dynamic or spirit like" effects of medicines. If there is any utility whatever in the higher attenuations it must be (in my judgment) through the undulatory theory of the nerve force, or by the means of the law of undulatory interference, which is possible. *Nous verrons*, among the polychrests, whose pathogenesis I have carefully studied, is one remedy which, *per se*, if I were to ignore all others, would more than pay me for my pains-taking, and, if homœopathy had done nothing for therapeutics but reveal the virtues of *Aconitum Napellus* it might even die content. The multiplicity of morbid conditions controlled by this single remedy are perfectly surprising. It is principally indicated, however, in acute inflammatory diseases. I have reduced the

temperature more readily and permanently with drop doses of the tinct. every x, xv, xxx or lx minutes, than with quinia, salicylate soda, or anything I have ever used. I have treated the different forms of croup, catarrhal, spasmodic, and pseudo-membranous with marked success, and if I could have but one remedy in the treatment of the most formidable variety, I would use *Aconite*, and with cloths wrung out of iced or cold water applied round the neck, should expect to save more patients than we do now with all our armamentarium. Methinks I hear you questioning the homœopathicity of the application of cold, whatever the *rationale* may be. It has certainly been remedial in my hands. Its effect is probably through the *vaso-motor* nerves, or those of reflex action. The application of dry heat to superficial burns (familiar to every housewife), or turpentine to those where there is destruction of tissue, or the application of snow to parts frozen, may be accounted for in the same way, although they are among the best instances which illustrate the homœopathic neural pathology, and relieved by mechanical or mechanico-chemical measures. Cold applied to the throat the while *Aconite* is being given alternately every hour or two with bromine or iodine not unfrequently relieves the very worst forms of *false membrane croup* in a few hours. Not only in croup but many other morbid conditions of children as well as adults I have learned to look upon a few drops of *Aconite* and some of its congeners as so many little giants, and have stood with awe, like the old Jew who witnessed the contest between the little shepherd boy, David, and Goliath. He must have been astonished to see the great giant fall from the effects of a little pebble stone after having resisted sword and bludgeon for so long a period. It is seemingly unnecessary to detail the great variety of cases I have treated by the law of similitude, the most of which have been equally as encouraging. *Post hoc ergo propter hoc*. "That a little leaven may leaven the whole lump." That it is better to be penny wise than pound foolish; that there is *multum in parvo*, though that little be of spectroscopic dimensions, and that these medicinal infinitesimals hold sway over morbid conditions administered in accordance with the law of *similia similibus curantur*; to say the least, *at times*, more satisfactory than remedies given according to the principles of *contraria contrariis curantur*. This result being the product of my own experimentation, I am positive of the integrity of my deductions, and inasmuch as it is our right and duty to employ any method or measure which the vast domain of nature may offer, I know of no good reason why I should not persist with my research, and adopt all that may be utilized in the treatment of disease.

As in society's gossip we should never be influenced by *ex parte* statements. *Vox populi* is not by any means *vox Dei*. In matters of such vital importance we should investigate for ourselves unbiassedly, and reserve our vituperation until we have proof positive. Do not forget the old French fable of the famished fox, the drum and the hen, where

it was found that that which made the most noise was false and unsatisfactory. My convictions may impinge upon others' notions, yet it is every one's prerogative and duty to abide by his best judgment, and in so doing I am frank to say, as *eclectics*, as rational physicians who have the good of mankind at heart, who labor for others' interests as well as our own we should select from all sources irrespective of *pathies*, or *isms*, or *creeds*, or *dogmas*, or society's opinions. It is in perfect *rapport* with true scientific research and the principles of right, candor, duty and justice. He who ignores a doctrine, a drug, or a remedial measure because of its name or association with some *pathy*, or *ism*, without giving it investigation, is unworthy of the name of teacher. It is true I have been culpable of that which I criticise, but then I was blind; now I see; and have the moral courage to say, *peccavi*. I was then like Nelson at the battle of the Baltic, who looked with his *blind eye* because he did not choose to see that the admiral had struck his colors. I have no penchant for homœopathy. In fact my early education was so completely imbued with the spirit of disgust that it has been one of the greatest barriers to overcome. Nevertheless if I find by actual experience that Hahnemann's remedies, administered in accordance with his law, or any other, more remedial, I shall have no hesitation to bring them into requisition, whereupon some Rip Van Winkle, some inimical, captious, critical "cuss" will probably feed me with the bread I have so often cast upon the water; with the same propriety I might be called a hydropath, or uropath, or thermopath, as a homœopath; the while I am still an *all*-opath, and doubtless always will be, though free to select from all sources at the risk of being considered heretical. After more than twenty-five years of earnest pupilage in the various departments of our science, I feel that I have but a smattering of each; but this I *do* know, that there is *certainly something* in homœopathy. The influences which have led me to this conclusion are both objective and subjective; not only that which I have been forced to see by my own experiments, but by looking about me and seeing the great tidal-wave which is every moment rising higher and higher. Had it not been reared upon a basis, not unlike that of the old Eddystone lighthouse, it would have perished and been washed away with the surf, scum, and drift-wood. But it has battled with the tempest, buffeted the waves, and stood the cross-fire of its enemies for more than three-score years. He must needs be blind in more than one eye who cannot see that its superstructure is something more than imagination, faith, sugar pills, water medicine, diet, delusion, etc. If there is not *something* in this doctrine why is it that the thinking classes, the greatest scholars, the best educated and most scientific men, the greatest travelers and most wealthy people patronize it? Now-a-days people are not apt to worship false gods and throw away their money upon uncertainties, and risk their health, their lives, and the dearest treasures on earth to everybody,—their children. If there is nothing in it why are

there in the United States alone to-day nearly seven thousand homœopathic practitioners who have graduated in our schools? It is very strange indeed if there is nothing in this law of correspondence that those of our school who have given it the greatest attention, the most thought, and have carefully investigated and experimented for themselves, invariably adopt, advocate, and practice it. And of the great number of learned men who have become enthusiasts, I have never heard of but one of any note who eventually became a dissenter, and that was Dr. Peters, who afterwards, I understand, succumbed to *ramollissement*.

Sir John Forbes, one of the most distinguished physicians of Great Britain, while editor of the British and Foreign Medical Review, thus expressed himself in relation to homœopathy, "That it comes before us in an imposing aspect and claims our attention on grounds which cannot be gainsaid. It presents itself as a new art of medicine, as a mode of practice utterly at variance with that long established in the world and claims the notice of mankind on the irresistible ground of its superior power of curing diseases and preserving human life. And it comes before us now, not in the garb of a suppliant, unknown and helpless, but as a conqueror, powerful, famous and triumphant. The disciples of Hahnemann are spread over the whole civilized world. There is not a town of any considerable size in Germany, France, Italy, England or America that does not boast of possessing one or more homœopathic physicians, not a few of whom are men of high respectability and learning, many of them in large practice, and patronized especially by persons in high rank. New books on homœopathy issue in abundance from the press, and journals devoted exclusively to its cause are printed and widely circulated in England and America. Numerous hospitals and dispensaries for the treatment of the poor on the new system have been established, many of which publish reports blazoning its successes not merely in warm phrases but in *hard words* and harder figures of *statistical tables*." The late Mr. Liston, one of the greatest English surgeons, and of whom Edinburgh has reason to be proud as one of the greatest surgeons she has ever produced, had the *manliness*, the *honesty*, the *candor* and liberality to avow in public that he derived his knowledge of the remarkable power of Aconite in subduing inflammatory fever, and of Belladonna in curing erysipelas from homœopathy. He often expressed his regrets that the power of Aconite to abate vascular over-action and supercede the necessity for abstraction of blood in many diseases was not known to him earlier, because he was convinced that it would have prolonged the life of his father, whose death had been hastened, in his opinion, by ill-judged copious venesection. This distinguished man having been encouraged by the success which had attended his administration of Aconite and Belladonna, requested Dr. Quin to furnish him with a few notes of other diseases and the names of the medicines usually prescribed by him for their cure. The request was immediately complied

with, and he subsequently informed Dr. Quin that he had employed the following medicines with great success: *Arnica montana*, internally and externally, in severe contusions, lacerations and incised wounds; *Rhus toxicodendron* in sprains, luxations, swellings and painful joints; *Nux vomica* in irritation of the bladder, obstinate constipation, and in some cases of partial paralysis; *Bryonia alba* in rheumatism and in arthritic pains of the joints; *Chamomilla* in diarrhœa, and as a palliative for toothache; *Pulsatilla* in retarded and suppressed catamenia; *Mercurius solubilis* alternated with *Belladonna* in cyananche tonsillaris, and ulceration of the fauces, and a variety of other medicines in diseases where they were homœopathically indicated. Concessions are occasionally made to the homœopaths of certain drugs by those who claim to be disbelievers in the law, thus, the great unbeliever (?) Sir James Y. Simpson, said in a lecture before the class in the University, "that Ipecacuanha causes vomiting, though he failed to cure a case of vomiting from pregnancy until he took the advice of Dr. Arndt, a homœopathist, and gave a half grain of Ipecac, and so cured his patient." The same version of this remark was given by Dr. Stewart and George Wild, M.D., who were pupils of Dr. Simpson's and both present at the time it was delivered. They however subsequently became eminent homœopathic practitioners and authors.

Much of the homœopathic literature to which I have had access I must confess is far from possessing classical scientific merit or medical erudition, and yet there are some works that will well compare with our best in pathology, practice of medicine, surgery and gynæcology. The gigantic strides made by homœopathy can not be better illustrated than to quote from Dr. Holcombe, from whose productions I have received many valuable hints. Dr. H. was an eminent old school practitioner for twenty years, having graduated at the University of Pennsylvania. His father also was an eminent physician of the old school. To-day Dr. H. stands at the head of the homœopathic ranks. He says "the witnesses to the spread and influences of homœopathy are numerous. We will call a few of them to the stand.

Witness the conceded fact that it is not the practice of the ignorant, of the incapable, or the fantastic and hypochondriacal, but that it absorbs and holds the lion's share in proportion to numbers of the strong minded, intelligent, and traveled portion of society which recognizes and treats homœopathic physicians as honorable and enlightened men and benefactors of humanity.

Witness a great effort made by hundreds of the most distinguished and aristocratic men in England to have homœopathy introduced into the army and navy of their country.

Witness the official recognition of homœopathy by the state of New York in the recent law directing that applicants for license to practice in that state shall be examined upon

homœopathy as well as upon allopathy by the state commissioners.

Witness the splendid banquet given by the City Council of Boston to the members of the American Institute of Homœopathy on the very spot where, eighteen years before, Oliver Wendell Holmes had predicted the speedy and utter extinction of the infinitesimal heresy.

Witness the great fair in Boston given while the Massachusetts allopathic association was expelling the homœopathic members from its body, a fair requiring three of the largest halls in the city to hold, and which realized \$80,000 for a homœopathic hospital.

Witness how the New York Ophthalmic Hospital, one of the largest and best endowed Eye and Ear hospitals in America, passed entirely from allopathic to homœopathic hands.

Witness, the people of Michigan insisting through their legislature that homœopathy should be taught to the students of the medical department in their state University.

Witness the legislature of New York appropriating \$300,000 to the establishment of a homœopathic insane asylum.

Witness how the Common Council of St. Louis compelled the allopathic professors to admit homœopathic students to the hospital clinics on an equal footing with their own.

Witness the decisions of the New York judiciary fining an allopathic physician for calling a homœopath a quack; declaring quackery to consist in conduct and not in creed, and insuring the protection of the law to honest and capable men when assailed by malignant partisans of another school. The quacks on both sides are exactly alike, and so are the gentlemen.

Witness the utter defeat which the allopathic faculty have sustained in several of the states where they endeavored to get control of the licensing systems with a view to the oppression of those whom they are pleased to term "irregular" practitioners.

Witness the indignant remonstrances of the people at the removal of the Commissioner of Pensions from office by his allopathic superior on the sole ground that he was a homœopathist, remonstrances so widespread and influential that they induced the government of the United States to declare that no distinction should be made on account of differences of opinion.

Witness how a life insurance company has been founded and prosperously conducted on the basis that human life is safer and longer on the homœopathic system than any other.

Homœopathy has met all the great epidemics and ever proved itself equal if not superior to the old school. When people say that the medicines are too weak to trust in severe cases, they do not remember, or do not know, that the great triumphs of homœopathy have always been effected in the most malignant class of diseases, such as cholera, scarlet fever, yellow fever, croup, erysipelas, dysentery, diphtheria, etc., etc. The fearful epidemics of cholera in 1848-9 gave the most astonishing impetus to homœopathy, and its special superiority in yel-

low fever has more than anything else established it on a permanent basis in the southern states."

These facts are sufficient to prove that the efforts of the homœopathic school to enlighten and educate the public mind as to its character, rights and privileges, have been attended by brilliant results. The public cares nothing for our theories or our squabbles. It estimates men by their attainments and their conduct, and medical practice by its failure or its success. It instinctively and sensibly denounces as bigotry and persecution any act of intolerance of one school towards another. If these declarations by the doctor are true, and they have been corroborated by other competent authority, it would appear obvious that the epithets so generally heaped upon this mode of practice are misnomers. If our curiosity was more easily piqued, and our professional hauteur, which has so long stood upon the pinnacle, would stoop to investigate the hidden mysteries which appear so preposterous, I am quite sure we would be agreeably surprised (to say the least) and if not adopt them would eventually ignore much of that which we have all our lives been taught and accustomed to look upon as the *sine qua non* in sound scientific practice. But we are so wilful, so obstinate, so inconsiderate and self-opinionated that it is only by accident that we are forced to give the theme any consideration. This has been the case with those who have become most eminent, among whom might be mentioned Prof. William Henderson, a colleague of Sir James Y. Simpson in the University for many years, and Dr. Thomas Skinner, of Liverpool, who was a pupil of Prof. Simpson, and in 1851-2 took his gold medal in gynæcology and obstetrics, and finally became his private assistant at his residence in Edinburgh. After some twenty years of reputable practice, he was placed *hors de combat* on account of a malady which baffled the skill of his compeers for three years, during which time he travelled much by land and sea, and in a very remarkable way was introduced to the noted homœopathist, Dr. Edward W. Berridge, London, who cured him in a short time. Dr. Skinner is to-day an eminent practitioner, teacher and author. Dr. Henderson is numbered among the dead, but has left behind his footprints in the sands of time which it would be difficult to erase. Many more great minds have followed in their wake, not only in Europe but in America, whose erudition, high culture, scholarly attainments and success as practitioners have made them world renowned. Suffice to say that if such men as these declare *magna est veritas et prevalebit* I can not consider it an opprobrium for one so humble as I to reach out for something more tangible, more satisfactory, more realistic and positive than that which is being preached in the market places by the rambolling Peters and Pauls, and while you, like some Greek disciples just emerging from the Athenian portico, glorying in the wisdom of the ancient philosophers, may be laughing to scorn my disposition for research, my liberalism and moral courage to promulgate the answer to the question of this subject matter, I

pray you to remember the lesson taught by St. Augustine : in things necessary we must have *unity*, in things doubtful *liberty*, and in all things *charity*.

Three months have elapsed since the foregoing was penned, during which time I have improved every favorable opportunity to treat acute diseases in accordance with the law of correspondence or similars. I have treated a great many cases of infantile diarrhœa with pleasing results. The remedies used in small and frequently repeated doses have been for the most part ipecac, veratrum album, arsenic, phosphoric acid and mercury. Two cases of strangury were treated successfully with drop doses of tincture cantharides ; a third case was not benefited and after two days it was discontinued, and one grain doses hourly of solid bals. copaiba were substituted ; after eight hours the patient reported almost entirely relieved. The remedy was continued *pro re nata* with mucilaginous drinks for three days.

Several cases of idiopathic and bilious colic yielded with like treatment to tincture of colocynth. My first case was so amusing that I beg leave to detail it. Early on the morning of May 14th I was called to see ———, aged 23 years ; found her suffering intensely from pain of a colicky character, which she averred had continued all night, accompanied with almost incessant vomiting, and her *facies hippocratica* evinced the truthfulness of her statement. Inasmuch as she positively refused the use of the hypodermic-syringe and disliked to take opiate enematas, and all the domestic remedies having been brought into requisition, including sinapisms and hot fomentations to the epigastrium, I gave her a powder of morphia and bismuth. It had not much more than reached the stomach before it was vomited ; in a few moments she took another with like result, whereupon I concluded to try Colocynth, which I purposely put in my pocket, having learned from the messenger that I was to see a case of colic. I dropped twelve drops into twelve tea spoonfuls of water and gave her a tea spoonful, which was retained. In ten minutes I gave another, in fifteen another. At this juncture I was obliged to absent myself on account of a case of labor. Returning in six hours my patient reported that "after the third dose of that stuff in the tumbler she began to grow easier, and after the sixth she was almost entirely relieved from pain ; she had had a little retching but had not vomited." One week later her sister came to my office and reported that my patient "was suffering again from the same malady, and she had sent her for some of that tumbler medicine." I prescribed the same, and as I learned afterward, with like results.

Now here was a case, which is only one of many, that perfectly surprised me, as I had no faith whatever in the remedial influence of the drug, but I knew it could do no harm in the event that it proved futile, and in the meantime I might persuade my patient to submit to the hypodermic syringe. But what cured my patient ? Was it faith, imagination, delusion,

or had that irritation of the gastric nerves and the spasmodic condition of the canal just got ready to behave? What was the rationale? No, it was not faith, imagination or delusion; for the patient did not know what I was giving her, nor do I believe that such pathological conditions yield of themselves so suddenly. If this drug in its infinitesimal dose is to be crowned with a laurel, (and it certainly should be), by what physiological reasoning can we account for it? We have not been taught to look upon it as an anodyne, a nullifier, a narcotic or pain assuager. It certainly did not control the malady by paralyzing the nerves as the morphine would have done. It did not mollify by diminishing the amount of blood in the part, nor did it relieve by revulsion. We know that a larger dose in a healthy person is capable of producing an artificial disease similar to the natural one that existed in this case. The *modus operandi* or rationale I will not attempt to elucidate at this time; suffice to say that in my judgment it could only have been brought about by its interference with the undulatory condition of the nerve fluid.

A few days since the vice-president of this association, knowing that I was giving some attention to the value of small and frequently repeated doses, very kindly placed in my hands a recent number of the *New York Medical Record*, which contains an article on this subject read before the New York Medical Association, by S. Henry Dessau, M. D., one of the physicians to the dispensary and foundling asylum. It appears that the doctor has been experimenting with modern therapeutics and his results will show that his conclusions necessarily concur with mine, already detailed. A careful perusal of his article will richly repay any one endowed with sufficient scientific spirit to mark the progress of the therapeutical part of medical study. A brief résumé of the practical part may not be uninteresting. He says "that in consequence of his attention having been particularly attracted to the frequency with which *Ringer* in his hand book of therapeutics recommended small doses of medicines, that we have been accustomed to use in much smaller doses, for entirely different diseases, he was induced to give them a trial." In the treatment of vomiting in children, whether due to stomach and intestinal disorder, or as a complication of pneumonia, he found the administration of drop doses of the wine of ipecac, repeated every hour, to act with the greatest success. In cases where diarrhœa coexisted and especially that form resembling dysentery, the same dose appeared to exert a curative effect. In the vomiting which follows a debauch, especially in women, he has treated several cases with drop doses of Fowler's solution of Arsenic repeated hourly, and says it works like a charm. In the morning vomiting of drunkards he gives it in drop doses three times a day before meals. In the vomiting which often complicates phthisis and its allied affection, chronic bronchitis, independent of that brought on by the cough, he gives either *Antim.* in from three to five grains, in solution every second or third hour, or drop doses

of the wine of antimony every hour. The latter seemed to speedily relieve the vomiting, particularly when accompanied by an exacerbation of bronchitis characterized by wheezing and great dyspnoea. In the bronchitis of children, where the coarse mucous rales produce loud wheezing with a loud asthmatical cough, he gives tea spoonful doses every hour or two of a solution containing one grain of tartar emetic to one pint of water, and claims they yield readily to its administration, and furthermore that when an intestinal catarrh coexists with the bronchial catarrh, the same remedy and dose will control both. In the gastro-intestinal catarrh of infants (the summer complaints) he uses calomel one-sixteenth of a grain every hour, hydrg. cum. creta one sixth of a grain with s. n. Bismuth, grains three to five, hourly repeated. In cases that resemble dysentery, or where the stools are mucous and are accompanied with more or less straining, with or without blood, he imitates *Ringer's* practice in giving the bichloride of mercury, grain one to sixteen ounces of water, one tea spoonful every hour or two; this is half the strength recommended by Eustace Smith, and Ringer adds one grain to ten ounces of water. When a case of gonorrhœa can be seen in the first twenty-four hours of the attack, he says an injection of a solution of chloride of zinc, one grain to a pint of water, used every hour, will cut short the disease in twenty-four hours. He prescribes drop doses of copaiba hourly in urticaria with good results, and treats cases of retarded menstruation with hourly drop doses of fluid extract of ergot. He recommends fluid extract of hamamelis in drop doses in obstinate epistaxis, belladonna in sore throat and facial erysipelas, nux vomica in sick headaches, whether due to error in diet, constipation, or no apparent cause. He has cured cases of strangury arising from subacute vesical catarrh with tincture of cantharides in drop doses hourly repeated. Speaks of small doses of pulsatilla in painful menstruation; mentions several cases of tetanus and hydrophobia cured with strychnia. For the purpose of reducing temperature he speaks very highly of the tincture of Aconite in drop doses every fifteen minutes to one hour, but says its use in the general profession has been discouraged by a prejudice of its favor with homœopathic practitioners.

I have thus given you a synopsis of the results of an inquiring mind, one that is apparently reaching out for new features and facts in the therapeutical art; a regular educated physician, but one who appears to me to be wilfully blind, or else he lacks the moral courage to stand up before his fellow man and acknowledge that he has been experimenting with modern homœopathy. When asked how, and upon what principle these small doses cure disease, he replies, "on the principle of actual experience, but that it is not upon the law of similars, for he had too many satisfactory demonstrations of the undoubted efficacy of full doses of medicines in the treatment of certain diseases to allow him to confine his belief in therapeutics to a single principle, and gives as an example the

treatment of acute dysentery with half dram to one dram doses of ipecac, one dose usually effecting a complete cure. From this statement I infer the author is not aware that according to the best authority in the new school of therapeutics, among whom might be mentioned one whom he quotes a *quasi* homœopathist, *Hughes*, of London, that the question of dose has nothing to do with the treatment of disease in accordance with the law of similitude. The dose of ipecac mentioned is as homœopathic as if it were the fractional part of a grain. If ipecac, tartar emetic and arsenic are not homœopathic to gastric and intestinal irritations, if strychnine is not homœopathic to tetanus, cantharides to strangury, colocynth to colic, nux vomica to diseases of the nervous system, and belladonna to an ordinary sore throat, then I certainly agree with Dr. Mason Good that the science of medicine is truly a jargon.

I do not believe that I am an Ishmaelite among you, only so far as my frank acknowledgements are concerned, for I have frequently communicated the results of my experimentation to the members of the profession as often as I have met them, to which many of them have replied: "Yes, I too have been using homœopathic remedies, but it won't do to acknowledge it, we would be ostracized and excommunicated by the societies." *Nonsense!* What difference should it make to us by what principle medicines control diseased action? If we are convinced that the law of similitude is a correct one, so far as it goes, then let us like men of honor and integrity, which our noble profession demands of us, meet the facts face to face and adopt them. In so doing we would not necessarily compromise ourselves with that class which throng the ranks composed of uneducated, illiterate tradesmen, *ex-cathedra* ministers, politicians and stevedores; and yet I am not quite certain but that the quickest way to exterminate them would be to affiliate, in which event stringent laws would soon crowd them to the wall.

But this was not the object of this paper. However great efforts are being made in Great Britain as well as in our own country to blend the two schools; and their efforts will doubtless be accomplished in the course of human events.

Hoping that these erratic thoughts may be instrumental in stimulating you to personal experiments with small and frequently repeated doses, which constitute a part of modern homœopathy, I submit the same for your consideration.
